



Capital Planning Committee

Capital Plan for FY2024 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)
5-Year Plan for FY2024 – FY2028

Date: Thursday, September 29, 2022

Time: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Location: Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Attendance: Joseph Barr (left at 5:30pm),
Ida Cody (arrived at 5:30pm),
Jose Farias,
Darrel Harmer,
Jonathan Haughton,
Kate Loosian,
Phyllis Marshall,
Michael Mason (left at 6:30pm),
Chris Moore,
Joe Solomon,
Julie Wayman, Budget Director,
Rob Behrent, Facilities Director.

Not in attendance: Timur Kaya Yontar.

Meeting Opened: Mr. Moore called the meeting to order at 5:03pm.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the September 15, 2022 meeting were reviewed and approved by the following vote:

Joseph Barr: Yes,
Ida Cody: Absent,
Jose Farias: Yes,
Darrel Harmer: Yes,
Jonathan Haughton (made motion to approve): Yes,
Kate Loosian: Abstain,
Phyllis Marshall: Yes,
Michael Mason (seconded motion to approve): Yes,
Chris Moore: Abstain,

Joe Solomon: Yes,
Timur Kaya Yontar: Absent.

Introductions: Mr. Moore reminded Committee members about the required state ethics training, and also had continuing Committee members introduce themselves for the benefit of the newly appointed members.

Department Presentations: Facilities Director Rob Behrent introduced himself to the Committee, including a brief background on his professional experience prior to taking this position with the Town. He then discussed the process for review of departmental requests that involve Facilities, to ensure that they are coordinate with other work and take into account best practices in facilities management. Mr. Behrent then talked about some of the key issues facing the facilities industry at this moment:

- Increased costs, as is being experienced everywhere due to supply chain issues and high inflation.
- Need to address air circulation concerns associated with COVID, particularly in school buildings. This includes some conflicting opinions regarding the need for – and benefits of – HEPA filters.
- Labor shortages/worker availability and training for both Town staff and vendors/contractors.
- Electrification of building systems to convert to sustainable energy sources.
- Implementation of interoperable building automation systems.
- Specifically for Arlington Public Schools, he is looking at needs for school buildings including roofing/insulation.

The Committee has a number of questions for Mr. Behrent:

- What does it mean to electrify a Town building, as compared to a home? Mr. Behrent noted that this can involve significant building systems costs, providing additional electrical supply, and identifying space for the electrical equipment.
- Can this work be funded from any of the various federal funding sources that have become available over the last couple of years. Mr. Behrent responded that they are looking into this closely with their engineers and consultants.
- Are we able to get a better estimate of what electrification costs and what the return on investment might be? Mr. Behrent responded that it's hard to know whether electrification has a reasonable payback period and these investments are partly based on the return on investment and partly based on the environmental benefits.
- When are we likely to see the first building that is electrified? Mr. Behrent was a little hesitant to respond because of the uncertainty but thought that maybe the fire station facilities might be the first buildings to be looked at for electrification.
- Is the new structure with Facilities being in charge building working out as planned? Mr. Behrent noted that he feels that it is working well so far, particularly with department heads viewing the Facilities department as an important internal resource. A Committee member noted that there is still some need to better define the demarcation line between individual departments and the Facilities Department.

- There was a request for an update on the asset management system. Mr. Behrent noted that SchoolDude is now known as Brightly, and they are working on rolling that out more broadly, hopefully by early in 2023. They have also added a module on top on Brightly that assists with predictive maintenance.

The Committee thanked Mr. Behrent for his presentation and his responses to questions.

Meeting Schedule: Mr. Moore noted that the next meeting is in a week, on October 6, 2022 and will include a presentation on the public safety departments. Ms. Cody noted that they may be able to present Libraries and the Information Technology Department at that meeting.

Definition of Capital Asset: Mr. Moore reviewed the definition of a capital asset that is used for the purposes of the Capital Plan. He then discussed the somewhat less clear definition of a capital improvement, which came up regarding certain capital requests for Schools in the FY23 capital plan. Mr. Haughton asked about situations where a capital item includes a service contract, and the response was there is usually an attempt to place those within the operating budget, but that doesn't always happen. Mr. Moore also clarified that the definition of "essentially identical units" truly means items that are identical, not a collection of related items.

Scoring Spreadsheet: Mr. Moore summarized the scoring spreadsheet that has been used by the Committee for the last few years, and the various pieces of information in the spreadsheet. He noted that the spreadsheet is designed to normalize individual Committee member scoring based on their grading, to compensate for members who are easy or hard graders. Ms. Marshall asked about whether future meetings will be recorded so that members who miss a meeting can reference the recording to do their scoring. Mr. Moore said that he would talk to Mr. Yontar about whether that is something that is possible going forward. Mr. Moore also clarified that the scoring is focused on the first year of the capital plan, since that is what the Committee is actually seeking to fund. He also noted that the scoring uses the median score for the Committee and also that the scoring works best when Committee members use the entire 1-through-5 range.

Subcommittee Report-Town Clerk: Ms. Cody presented the two projects being requested by the Town Clerk:

- **New Voting Booths:** The Town Clerk is requesting funding for new voting booths that are lighter and more comfortable for users. The estimate for this project is \$26,791 in FY24 and \$7,980 in FY25 (this is just a placeholder because it's not totally clear if that funding will be needed). One of the uncertainties around this need is the increase in voting by mail, which may reduce the number of voting booths needed.
- **Poll Pads:** The subcommittee noticed that this request did not include the expected replacement of the already purchased iPads, which may need to be replaced in FY28, so that funding was added to the request (though it may be possible to push the lifespan of these units, if the required voting software continues to be compatible with older iPads). The subcommittee also noted that this has led to reductions in

staffing needs at polling locations. The subcommittee noted that this request brought up questions about the impact of inflation and the suggestion that the Committee adopt a consistent assumption on inflation for future years (beyond FY24). Mr. Moore noted that some departments are already making certain assumptions on inflation, but also that it may be difficult to make assumptions that are consistent across different types of capital improvements.

Subcommittee Report-Town Manager: Ms. Cody presented the two projects being requested by the Town Manager's Office:

- **Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations:** This request includes furnishing and installing two Level 2 charging stations, each of which has two charging heads. These will charge 30¢/kWh, which does not include recouping any of the capital costs. They are also seeking out other funding sources for future charging stations, although the amounts requested do not assume any external funding. If external funding was received, they would likely add to the number of stations to be installed. The locations being prioritized are at public locations near schools and near parks (particularly in East Arlington). A question was raised as to whether they had consulted with the Department of Planning and Community Development, and the subcommittee said that they would check on this. The Committee also raised questions about the overall siting process and whether there has been any outreach on the locations. The subcommittee also raised a question about the current utilization of existing stations, and the need to keep an eye on the real need to expand the number of stations. However, purchasing and installing these stations is expensive and time consuming, which makes it difficult to respond quickly if demand increases quickly/suddenly.
- **Bigbelly Solar Trash Compactors:** This request is for an additional 10 compactors, for a total of \$50,000, in FY25 (this is an additional request subsequent to the original submittal of requests). These would mostly be placed in the business districts. There was a question about ongoing maintenance; they have a five-year warranty on the software, but this does not cover physical maintenance. There was a question about the operating savings associated with these, but it is too early to tell since not that many have been installed yet.

The Committee preliminarily approved the recommended funding for the two items from the Town Clerk and the Bigbelly trash compactors, and deferred consideration of the charging stations pending additional information, by the following vote:

Joseph Barr: Absent,
Ida Cody: Yes,
Jose Farias (seconded motion to approve): Yes,
Darrel Harmer: Yes,
Jonathan Haughton: Yes,
Kate Loosian (made motion to approve): Yes,
Phyllis Marshall: Yes,
Michael Mason: Absent,
Chris Moore: Yes,

Joe Solomon: Yes,
Timur Kaya Yontar: Absent.

New Business: There was no new business.

Meeting Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm, based on the following vote:

Joseph Barr: Absent,
Ida Cody: Yes,
Jose Farias: Yes,
Darrel Harmer: Yes,
Jonathan Haughton (seconded motion to adjourn): Yes,
Kate Loosian (made motion to adjourn): Yes,
Phyllis Marshall: Yes,
Michael Mason: Absent,
Chris Moore: Yes,
Joe Solomon: Yes,
Timur Kaya Yontar: Absent.